Audit of City Clerk’s Office – Passport Services

CAO 0221-1011-05

December 1, 2010

Background

- In May 2008, the City Clerk's Office became an authorized Passport Acceptance Facility for the Passport Services division of the Bureau of Consular Affairs within the United States Department of State.

- The City Clerk's Office accepts passport applications and ensures all materials needed to process the application are correctly submitted.

Background

- City Clerk Office employees that process passports must meet specific requirements and receive training to become approved Passport Acceptance Agents.
- The City Clerk’s Office had 12 employees that qualify as Passport Acceptance Agents at the time of the audit.
- During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2010, the City Clerk’s Office processed 651 passport applications.

Background

The City Clerk's Office receives the following fees for their services:

- $25 execution fee for each passport application processed.
- $10 fee for passport photos.
- Overnight postage fees if service requested.

- All other fees from customers are sent along with the passport applications to a passport issuance agency for processing.

Objectives

The audit objectives were to:

- **Determine whether payments made to the City Clerk's Office for processing passport applications (execution fees, passport photos, overnight mailing fees) are being properly receipted and recorded in accordance with City policies and procedures.**

- **Determine whether the City Clerk is appropriately fulfilling its responsibilities as an Acceptance Agent Facility in accordance with the general guidelines provided by the Department of State.**

- **Determine whether the City Clerk's performance measurements related to passport services are appropriate and accurate.**

Audit Findings

As a result of our audit procedures, we found that the aforementioned objectives were being appropriately achieved by the City Clerk's Office.

We also identified several improvements that are needed in Passport Services' operations.

Audit Findings – Improvements Needed

The City Clerk's Office needs to create and document a uniform methodology for entering information within the comment field within the Atlas System and require that the names of the applicants be placed in this field when the customer making payment is different than the passport applicant(s). (Recommendation 1.1)

The City Clerk's Office needs to evaluate how to ensure its Acceptance Agents remain in compliance with the "no criminal history" requirement. (Recommendation 2.1)

Audit Findings – Improvements Needed

The City Clerk's Office needs to retain documentation showing that its Acceptance Agents have complied with the U.S. Department of State training requirements (e.g., certificates of attendance, class sign-in sheets). (Recommendation 2.2)

The City Clerk's Office needs to begin filing annual re-certifications of its compliance with the Passport Acceptance Program. (Recommendation 3.1)

Management Responses

- Management Responses to the audit recommendations can be found at the back of the report.
- We have already verified that Management has addressed all four of the recommendations within this report.

QUESTIONS

Auditors:

- **Radford Snelding, City Auditor**
- **Bryan Smith, Sr. Internal Auditor**

Representatives from City Clerk's Office:

- **Beverly Bridges, City Clerk**
- **Stacey Campbell, Asst. Deputy City Clerk**